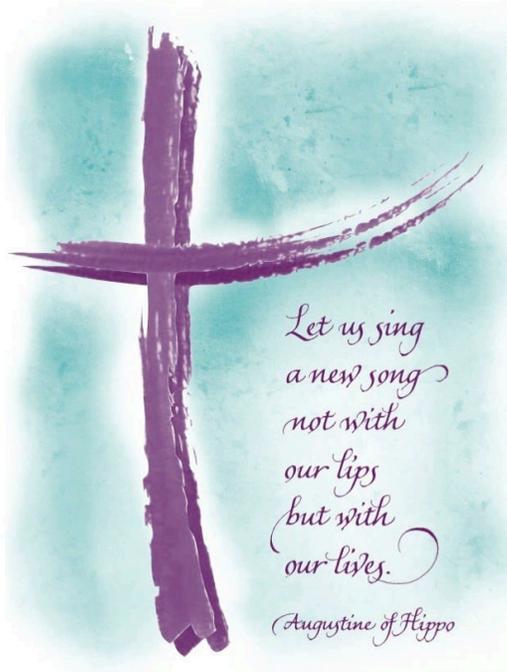




St. Mark's Lutheran Church

March 2026

Reflections on a Lenten Journey



Every year at the start of Lent I ask myself, "what is going to be different in my life because of my Lenten Journey." It often feels like the "New Year's Resolution" discussions I have with myself. How can I be kinder, show God's love to others, be less judgmental, more spiritual?

Will this Lent be different from last year? Will whatever I do (or don't do) have a lasting impact on my life as a faithful person? Will it have a lasting impact on others? The perfectionist in me wants to get it right. How can I lead and encourage others in their journey if I'm feeling lost and uncertain?

Then I hear God's still small voice saying, "just keep it simple!" God doesn't expect us to change the world overnight or ourselves for that matter.

I believe God's deepest desire is for us to know that God is still God (and I am not!). God is still at work in my friends, family, and all the perfect strangers (to me) in the world and in me. That is sometimes the hardest thing for me to remember – it is not all about me. Life is about walking each day trusting that God is doing so much in the world that I will never know about or see. Trusting that my job is to get up every morning, do the best I can for that day and turn over all the rest to God before I sleep at night.

The Preschool children's favorite song is "My God is so big, so strong and so mighty. There's nothing my God cannot do." I only wish I remembered that more often.

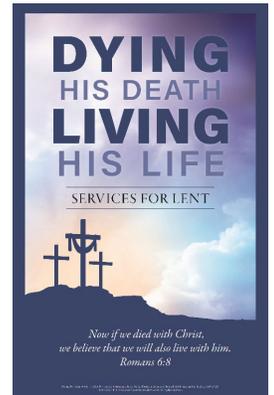
This Lent maybe I will give up thinking God depends on me and take in how much I depend on God. How big is your God?

Pastor Karen

Worship & Study Opportunities

Lent 2026

We continue through our series that reminds us that we are buried with Christ in his death so that we might live with him in his resurrection. The old is gone. The new has come. In word and song we contemplate those things that were put to death on the cross so that we might receive the blessings of new life in Christ.



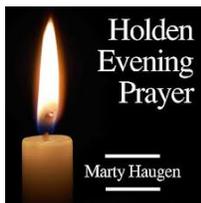
Sundays at 9:30 a.m.

March 1 • Dying to Greed, Living for the Treasures of Heaven

March 8 • Dying to Doubt, Living by Faith

March 15 • Dying to Turmoil, Living in Peace

March 22 • Dying to Judgment, Living in Grace

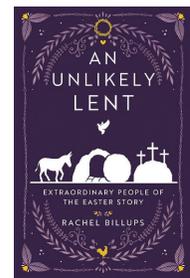


Midweek Evening Prayer

We will gather at 7:00 p.m. on Zoom for Holden' Evening Prayer and a brief devotion. Everyone is welcome. The Zoom link: [Wednesday in Lent](#)

Midweek Book Study for Lent

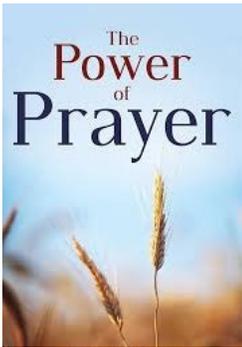
On **Tuesday** mornings we will be studying Rachel Billups "An Unlikely Lent." At 10:30 a.m. (on Zoom or in person). We will hear of lesser-known witnesses of Jesus' death. Available from Amazon and other sources. Zoom link: [Tuesday mornings in Lent](#)



Holy Week – 2026



Growing Together to Serve...



We are praying for...

Our members

Ivonne Bradford, Elsie Edgeman, Sarajane Hakenen, Gabby Hansen, Jim Hanser and family, Pamela Lyons, Karen Mullin, Marilyn Nelson, Gerda

Reid, Stu Reid, and Josie Traugher.

Homebound

Janet Benson, V-Anne Chernock, Kathy Doty, Judith Eckhart, Richard Ehman, Robert McGee, and Shirley Quinn.

Our friends and loved ones:

Kim Arnold, Bruce Atkinson, Makita Bond, Adrian Butler, Tracy Camara, Roxanne Costan, Dave Eubanks, Kyle Forristall, Dave Frogget, Ed Goldberg, Rob Hakenen, Nicholas Hanson, Shaman Houpt, Phil Ladiero, Sandy Larson, Rene Maddox, Linda Mahoney, Mike Michaelsen, Rev. Kirsten Moore, Sarah True Mulligan, Helen Powell, Cheryl Rassmussen, Jo Reed, Sharon Sanderson, John Scarrott, Toni Scarrott Collins, Bob Stevenson, Rhonda Stokes, Tammy Stone, Nardos Tesfaye, Weldon Tunnell, Lorna Walter, Suzanne Wilson, and Laurie Ziegler.



Gordene & Ronald Pienovi – 03/28

Our homebound Members



Janet Benson
3305 Hartford Ave
Fairfield, CA 94534

V-Anne Chernock
10030 Newton Ave
Apt 248, Bloomington MN 55421

Kathy Doty, Magnolia Court Senior
Assisted Living, 111 Ulatis Dr, Room
204, Vacaville, CA 95687

Judith Eckhart, 3760 Upland Drive,
Auburn, CA 95602

Richard Ehman, Magnolia Court Senior
Assisted Living, 111 Ulatis Dr,
Room 124, Vacaville, CA 95687

Robert McGee, 41 Avalon Way,
Suisun City, CA 94585

Shirley Quinn, 11 Lemon Tree Cir.,
Vacaville CA 95687

Please remember them with your
cards, visits and calls.

MARCH BIRTHDAYS

Donna Zaier – 03/06
Cindy deRosier – 03/12
Carole Greeley – 03/16
Marilyn Nelson – 03/20
Dale Puskas – 03/23
Rene Puskas – 03/25
Don Eager – 03/25

LOOKING AHEAD

Scripture Readings for Year A March 2026

Sunday, March 1, 2026 Second Sunday of Lent

- Isaiah 53:8-10
 - By perversion of justice, he was taken away
- 1 Peter 1:13-21
 - Prepare your minds for action
- Luke 12:16-21
 - The land of a rich man parable.

Sunday, March 8, 2025 Third Sunday of Lent

- Proverbs 3:5-8
 - Trust in the Lord with all your heart
- James 1:5-8
 - Lacking in wisdom? Ask God
- Matthew 14:22-33
 - Jesus walks on water

Sunday, March 15, 2026 Fourth Sunday of Lent

- Psalm 6:2-9
 - Turn, O Lord, save my life
- Philippians 4:6-9
 - Be anxious for nothing.
- John 14:25-29
 - The Advocate will teach you everything

Sunday, March 22, 2025 Fifth Sunday in Lent

- Jonah 3:1-10
 - The word of the Lord came to Jonah
- Romans 6:1-11
 - Should we continue in sin?

March 2026

- John 8:2-11
 - Jesus began to teach them

Sunday, March 29, 2025 Palm Sunday

- Isaiah 50:4-9a
 - The servant of the Lord submits to suffering
- Psalm 31:9-16
 - Into your hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit.
- Philippians 2:5-11
 - Humbled to the point of death on a cross
- Matthew 21:1-11
 - Jesus enters Jerusalem

Worship Assistants



March 1

Assisting Minister	Jim Hanser
Reader	Marilyn Nelson
Communion Assistant	Diane Metz
Greeter	Josephine Traughber
Slides	Eva Lipke
Sound	Jacqueline Marrolli
Livestream	Mike Gravink

March 8

Assisting Minister	Jim Hanser
Reader	Debi Kopmann
Communion Assistant	Debi Kopmann
Greeter	Sherri Scarrott
Slides	Eva Lipke
Sound	Rose Hanser
Livestream	Mike Gravink

March 15

Assisting Minister	Toni McCallum
Reader	Les Johnsen

Communion Assistant	Les Johnsen
Greeter	Cheryl Hurd
Slides	Eva Lipke
Sound	Tom Lingel
Livestream	Mike Gravink

March 22

Assisting Minister	Karin MacMillan
Reader	Colleen Rivers
Communion Ass.	Josephine Traugher
Greeter	Pat McKillips
Slides	Eva Lipke
Sound	Jacqueline Marroli
Livestream	Mike Gravink

March 29

Assisting Minister	Ann Hefner-Gravink
Reader	Jackie Marroli
Communion Assistant	Jackie Marroli
Greeter	Dan & Fay DiSano
Slides	Eva Lipke
Sound	Jim & Rose Hanser
Livestream	Mike Gravink

The Contemporary Music Team Rehearses on Thursdays at 5:30 p.m. in the Worship Center and perform on the first and third Sundays.

All voices are welcome and we encourage you to share your gifts!



Council Highlights

Council met on February 12 at 11:30 a.m. Highlights include:

- Welcomed and oriented new members
- Finalized Job Description for Council Liaisons
- Approved Minutes of January meeting as amended
- Approved Finance Report as amended
- Approved Pastor's Continuing Education event: Preacher's Retreat sponsored by Working Preacher & Luther Seminary. August 3 – 7, 2026, Ghost Ranch, Santa Fe, NM (cost included in budget)
- Received notice of Approval by Sierra Pacific Synod of 2024 & 2025 Constitutions
- Scheduled Council/Congregation Retreat for March 14 at 9:00 a.m. in the Fireside Room
- Gratefully accepted the offer of Mr. Timmins to audit our cyber security
- We received a report clarifying the Food Pantry's usage of electricity (special monitors were temporarily installed).

All God's critters

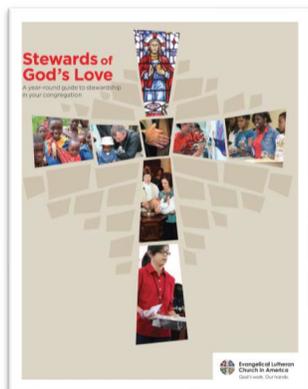


got a place in the choir.

Or Contemporary Music Team!

The choir rehearses every Tuesday at 11:30 a.m. and Sunday at 8:30 a.m. perform their anthems on the second and fourth Sundays of the month.

The next meeting will be Thursday, March 12, 2026 at 11:30 a.m. in the Pastor's Study.

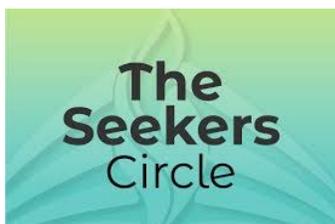


Stewards of
God's Love
Team
welcomes your
input..

Join the group in the Digerud Room on Tuesday, March 24th at 3:00 p.m. to bring ideas for a yearly theme. Or share your thoughts with team members, Jim Hanser, Stew Irwin, Colleen Rivers or Diane Metz.

March 12

Digerud Room
9:30—11:30
a.m.



"I AM" —Bread,
vine and light!

John 6, 8 and 15

Karin MacMillan is the host. All women are invited in person or on ZOOM (contact [Diane Metz](#)). You can download the printed and video lessons for Spring 2026 here: ["I Am"](#)

Tuesday Lent Bible Study

An Unlikely Lent by Rachel Billups will guide us each Tuesday.

10:30—11:30 a.m. on Zoom
[Tuesday Bible Study](#)

Wednesday Bible Study Special time for Lent 6:00 p.m. (Zoom)

An in-depth study of the scripture readings for the coming week. How are the readings related (or not!). Contact Jim Hanser (hanserjames@comcast.net) for more information.



March 2026

- March 1 Neptune Society
Dana Hansen
 - March 8 Preschool Update
Director Lucille Bowers
 - March 15 Spring Craft
 - March 22 Estate Lawyer Frank Acuna
 - March 29 Palm Sunday Crash Course
Religion
- Zoom link: [Sunday Connections](#)

Email Ann at drannhg@sbglobal.net for more information. Everyone is invited to offer ideas for events, etc. Next meeting: Thursday, April 30, at 1:00 p.m. (Zoom)

Serving our community here and around the world

Quilting
for
Lutheran
World
Relief



Quilt-fest on in the Quilting Room
Wednesdays—10:00 a.m. –1:30 p.m.
Patching the World Together

Our thanks for recent donations from
Ann Hefner Gravink, Pat McKillips and
Donna Zaier!

Everyone is welcome to join the team!
Come when they can and leave when
you must.



Examples of the
thrift-store finds, and
a potholder made in
Sunday Connections
with the Quilters!

Contact [Diane Metz](#) with questions
about donations or how to get
involved.

January 2026
Statistics



The Bette Noll St. Mark's Food Pantry
served **4,535** people in **1,034**
families from our neighborhood.
That's an average of **907** people (207
families) a week!

618 volunteer hours and donations
from so many people are helping us
make a difference!

What can you do?
Help the Food Pantry be a little
"greener" by bringing your extra
reusable totes bags. Help us cut
reduce the number of plastic grocery
bags used and encourage our guests
be as "earth friendly" as possible.
Please place your contributions on the
table in the narthex/lobby hallway
with other Food Pantry donations.

2026 Council Retreat



You are enthusiastically invited
to join our elected leaders as
they explore what it means to
"serve our community."
We look forward to seeing you
all.

9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
Saturday, March 14, 2026
Fireside Room

Serving with our Partners in Ministry



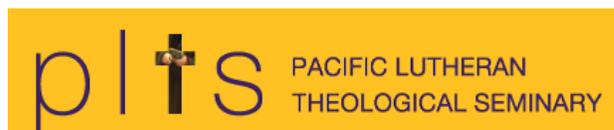
What is Happening in the Sierra Pacific Synod & the ELCA

Click the link for March events and sign up for the ELCA newsletter. [Congregational Happenings – Sierra Pacific Synod](#)



Support Federal Emergency Management Agency Reform

With the reintroduction of the Truth and Healing Commission on Indian Boarding Schools Act in both the House and Senate, now is the time to remind Congress of its responsibility to survivors of the Indian boarding school era. [Take action](#)



A discernment weekend: "Signs Along the Way" from Friday at 4:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m. Sunday.

March 13-25, Berkeley, CA

- Engage your sense of call
- Explore what it's like to be a Distributed Learning student
- Experience a PLTS class and connect with others

[More information and registration here.](#)



A Night of Centering Multiracial Voices Across the ELCA

Watch the recording of the ELCA's observation of the National Day of Racial Healing, which featured intentional storytelling, deep listening and reflection. [Watch](#)



Holy Cross
MINISTRIES

Ben Lomond, CA

2026 Spring Women's Retreat

"God's Image"

March 13~March 15

"The more a person loves, the closer [she] approaches the image of God."
Martin Luther

Pr. Friederike Wekel will guide the retreat for all women.

[Register here.](#)



Learn more about the ELCA Region 2 Lenten Challenge and sign up at lentenchallenge.org.



LUTHERAN OFFICE
of PUBLIC POLICY
-CALIFORNIA

Lutheran Lobby Day

**Save the Date for Wednesday,
May 20th!**

Advocates, come one, come all! We are gathering as Lutherans and people of faith who live in California on **Wednesday, May 20th, 2026** (8:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.). Meet with your state legislative offices and connect with others in our state! Stay tuned for more info in the coming weeks. [Learn more](#) about what a Lobby Day involves.



Senior Food Program

Location: St. Mark's Food Pantry
Dates: First and Third Wednesdays
Time: 9:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.

For additional food distribution sites [click here.](#)

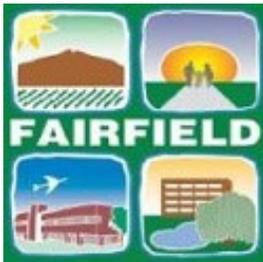


Monday and
Wednesdays

12:00 noon
Digerud Room

Al-Anon (meaning
Alcoholics

Anonymous) is a mutual support
group for people who have been
affected by a loved one's drinking.
Alateen is a similar family group that
supports young people who live with
or who have been affected by alcohol.



Fairfield News
Join neighbors and
friends supporting
our community.
For ongoing news
and events [subscribe
here.](#)



CANB's Access

CanB is an organization
in Fairfield dedicated to
supporting our
homeless neighbors.

They have food, clothing, shoes and a
connection to services for our
neighbors living on the streets.

They accept donations of food,
clothing and shoes. Check out their
website for the services they provide
and to volunteer [CanB.](#)

This free tax service continues
through April 18

Free tax preparation is available
(Bethel Room) by appointment only
on



Saturdays from 8:30 a.m.—3:00 p.m.

To schedule an appointment please
call (707) 689-9960



MORE Program Outreach

The Housing Services Department is
moving forward with launching the
City's new Manufactured Housing
Opportunity & Revitalization (MORE)
Program, which provides funding to
help low-income mobile homeowners
address critical health and safety
repairs. [Click here for details.](#)

What's happening at St. Mark's February 2026

Recurring Calendar of Events

Sunday

- 8:30 a.m. Choir Rehearsal
- 9:30 a.m. SMLC Worship (Worship Center/Live Streaming)
- 10:30 a.m. Fellowship (Worship Ctr)
- 10:45 a.m. Sunday Connections (Digerud/Zoom)
- 11:00 a.m. Pentecost Temple (Comm. Cen.)
- 2:30 p.m. Ministerios Ebenezer (Comm. Center)

Monday

- 12:00 p.m. Al-Anon Meeting (Digerud Room)

Tuesday

- 9:30 a.m. Preschool Chapel
- 10:30 a.m. Book Study (Zoom)
- 11:30 a.m. Choir Rehearsal
- 2:00 p.m. St. Mark's Food Pantry

Wednesday

- 9:30 a.m. Preschool Chapel
- 9:30 a.m. Solano Food Bank Senior Program (Fd Ptry 1st & 3rd)
- 10:00 a.m. Quilt-fest (Quilt Rm)
- 12:00 p.m. Al-Anon (Digerud Room)
- 6:00 p.m. Bible Study (Zoom)
- 7:00 p.m. Midweek Lent Service (Zoom)

Thursday

- 5:30 p.m. Contemporary Music Team Rehearsal (Worship Center)

Friday

- 7:00 p.m. Ebenezer Mission (Comm Center)

Saturday

- 9:00 a.m. VITA Tax Free Service (Bethel Room)

March 2026

Additional Events

Monday, March 2

- 7:00 p.m. Symphony Strings (Nelson Music Room)

Tuesday, March 3

- 5:30 p.m. Worship & Music Comm.

Wednesday, March 4

- 10:00 a.m. Bible Study at Magnolia Court

Thursday, March 5

- 7:00 p.m. Symphony Strings (Nelson Music Room)

Monday, March 9

- 11:30 a.m. Widow's Lunch @ Mimi's

Wednesday, March 11

- 5:30 p.m. Solano Symphony Board

Thursday, March 12

- 9:30 a.m. Seeker's Circle
- 11:30 a.m. Council Meeting

Saturday, March 14

- 9:00 a.m. Council Retreat (Fireside Room)

Tuesday, March 17

- 12:15 p.m. Preschool Board

Tuesday, March 24

- 3:00 p.m. Stewardship Team (Digerud Room)

Join us for worship every Sunday

9:30 a.m. for in person & live streaming service

on YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/@SMLCFairfield> (or click [HERE](#))

St. Mark's Mission: To Nurture Discipleship, Communicate the Gospel and Serve the Community.

St. Mark's Vision: To transform each church member into Christ-led disciples, nurtured and equipped by God's Word, whose purpose is to build up the Body of Christ in Solano County and the world.

St. Mark's Welcoming Statement: Adopted January 19, 2020

"We are St. Mark's Lutheran Church where everyone is welcomed and everyone is loved. We invite all into the grace, love and acceptance we have from God. We welcome YOU: who you are, as you are.

- All who are single, married, partnered, divorced, with or without children
- All sexual orientations, gender identities and gender expressions
- All racial, ethnic, and social backgrounds
- All who are homed or homeless
- All who are struggling with addictions or other personal hardships
- All ages and levels of physical and mental health and abilities
- All faith backgrounds, those questioning their faith and those new to faith

We invite you to fully participate in the life and ministry of St. Mark's Lutheran Church where we seek to share God's love and grace through word and action."



St. Mark's Lutheran Church
1600 Union Avenue, Fairfield, CA 94533
707-422-4741
office@stmarksfairfield.org;
www.stmarksfairfield.org



Rev. Karen Stetins, Senior Pastor
Kim Worthen, Office Administrator
Semyon Lohss, Accompanist, Choral Director
Lucille Bowers, Preschool Director
Michelle Aas, SMLC's bookkeeper

Council Members

Ann Hefner-Gravink (President) June Johnsen (Vice President), Jacqueline Marroli (Secretary), Stew Irwin (Finance Chair), Toni McCallum and Karin MacMillan (Members at Large).

Elected Leaders

Linda Froggett (Financial Secretary), Les Johnsen (Treasurer)
Fay DiSano, Personnel Committee Chairperson